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UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

FINAL REPORT SERIES

Non-governmental organizations involvement in IYC

Report by
The Non-Governmental Organizations' Committee on UNICEF

6850C

The Final Report Series on the International Year of the Child consists of the following nine documents (which are issued separately).*

THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD IN PERSPECTIVE (E/ICEF/Misc.366) (September 1981) describes the principal features and activities of the year throughout the world. It contains a preface by James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF.

HIGHLIGHTS OF NATIONAL ACTION IN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD (E/ICEF/Misc.367) (May 1981) consists of summaries of the work done at the national level by IYC commissions and other groups responsible for IYC programmes in 168 countries and territories.

HIGHLIGHTS OF UNITED NATIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGENCY REPORTS ON INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD (E/ICEF/Misc.368) (May 1981) summarizes the main activities and accomplishments of these agencies in observance of the Year.

SUCCESSORS TO NATIONAL IYC COMMISSIONS (E/ICEF/Misc.369) (May 1981) lists the names and addresses of successors to national IYC commissions, assigned to follow up on the Year.

PRINCIPAL UNITED NATIONS DOCUMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS PERTAINING TO IYC (E/ICEF/Misc.370) (September 1981) gives a list of the main UNICEF, Economic and Social Council and General Assembly documents and resolutions issued between 1974 and 1980 pertaining to the Year.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' INVOLVEMENT IN IYC (E/ICEF/Misc.371) (September 1981) deals with the contributions to the Year by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This document was prepared by the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

PUBLICATIONS ISSUED DURING THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD OR HAVING THEIR ORIGIN IN THE YEAR (E/ICEF/Misc.372) (September 1981)

STUDIES ON CHILDREN, PRODUCED IN OR AS A RESULT OF IYC (E/ICEF/Misc.373) (September 1981)

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES AND SPECIAL EVENTS HELD DURING OR IN RELATION TO IYC (E/ICEF/Misc.374) (September 1981)

Documents in the IYC Final Report Series may be obtained upon request from the UNICEF Documents Unit, 866 United Nations Plaza, New York, 10017, or from the UNICEF Office for Europe, Palais des Nations, CH-1211, Geneva 10, Switzerland.

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* A brochure based on the report series giving highlights from it will be issued in the latter part of 1981.

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Introductory note

For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with UNICEF, the International Year of the Child became the focus of interest and source of inspiration for many innovative activities. No description can fully do justice to the spirit of co-operation and unity that was exhibited by voluntary agencies and their members throughout the world. Without the good will of organized and spontaneous groups, the results of IYC could not have been achieved. Non-governmental organizations, both from developing and highly industrialized countries, with varying specialties, with different political views, with members from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, worked within the framework of IYC on behalf of all the world's children. Local initiatives were taken by many groups, world-wide plans were made by others, experiences shared and programmes evaluated.

The wealth of the material collected on NGO involvement in IYC made it desirable to issue this report separately, as a supplement to the final IYC report, to provide a historical overview and a resource for the future planning of activities.

The idea for an international year for the child was originally conceived by a representative of an NGO, Canon Joseph Moerman, Secretary-General of the International Catholic Child Bureau, and was promoted by him until it became a reality. With unflagging strength and a rare capacity to bring people together and inspire them to work towards one goal, Canon Moerman led the NGO/IYC Committee from the very first plans in 1976 through an enormously successful IYC in 1979, during which the Committee played a key role, and to an enlarged scope of work for children in the post-IYC period. Towards this last end he guided the Committee through its transition and to its absorption by the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

While Canon Moerman and his staff worked untiringly in Geneva, Switzerland, holding the threads of a network suddenly grown world-wide, the Vice-Chairman of the NGO/IYC Committee, Helaine Plaut, and its Executive Director, Mildred Jones, worked just as untiringly with a small and devoted staff in New York, close to the IYC headquarters. These two small nuclei in Europe and North America gave life and spirit to the whole.

Without the understanding support and continuous encouragement of Henry R. Labouisse, then Executive Director of UNICEF, the NGO/IYC Committee could not have accomplished what it had set as its goal. He was always available and ready with advice and suggestions. His wisdom and leadership were of enormous value to those involved in the efforts for IYC.

Great appreciation must also be expressed to the numerous organizations and individuals whose involvement in IYC crowned the Year with the splendid and unique success that will remain an example of collaboration and accomplishment to all of us.

And finally, our introduction would not be complete without a special note of thanks to Kathleen Cravero for her outstanding work in compiling and assessing the voluminous material provided by NGO contributors and the quality of this report which she prepared for the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

Kate Katzki
Chairperson (Sept. 1979- Sept. 1981)
NGO Committee on UNICEF

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Preface

It is good to have this report on the participation of non-governmental organizations in the International Year of the Child, published 18 months after the end of IYC. It outlines clearly and comprehensively the major characteristics of IYC as far as NGO activity was concerned. Fortunately, it is not limited to what happened in the past but looks towards the future and indicates some of the basic elements for a lasting follow-up.

For those who were active during IYC, these major characteristics remain fresh in mind and they should be considered, as is done in this report, from two points of view: the involvement of the NGO/IYC Committee - the leading NGO mechanism - and the various activities of the many NGOs. It may be useful to recall that the NGO/IYC Committee was created with the support of three main groupings of international NGOs: the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, the UNESCO/NGO Standing Committee, and the NGO Committee on UNICEF. These three patrons left the NGO/IYC Committee completely free to develop its own activities. Consequently, the NGO/IYC Committee was able to work with all NGOs which were international in character and eager to undertake activities in the context of IYC.

The primary function of the Committee was to stimulate activities by NGOs rather than to develop its own programmes. This made it possible for NGOs to take initiatives according to their own resources and their own potential. The Committee refrained from adopting any political stances/attitudes and in so doing opened the way for co-operation with NGOs of varying points of view. Its collaboration with both UNICEF and the United Nations IYC secretariat was developed in a spirit of mutual confidence and, as a result, the Committee's relations with the United Nations system during IYC were always excellent. In this regard, I should like to take this opportunity to thank once again UNICEF, Mr. Henry Labouisse, its Executive Director at the time, the IYC secretariat, and Mrs. Estefania Aldaba-Lim, the Special Representative for IYC, for their unparalleled co-operation and understanding.

As far as the NGOs themselves are concerned, no one can deny the major role they played both nationally and internationally. Those who were already engaged in child-related activities found in IYC an occasion to increase and diversify their initiatives, while many others discovered during IYC that their activities could be far more relevant to the interests of children than they had previously thought. Most of these are pursuing their work in the light of the discoveries they made during IYC.

We shall, of course, never know just how much was done during IYC. We cannot hope to bring to light every one of the small projects that were developed on a local scale, in remote areas and very often in difficult circumstances, and it is therefore all the more important that we acknowledge their initiators. On behalf of the future of humankind, and with deep emotion, I thank all those who tirelessly work for the benefit of children, especially those whose efforts remain unknown.

If I refer to the future of humankind, it is because from now on we have to focus on the future and build on both the impetus and the experience of the past. My thoughts go first of all to those who, in the coming years, will work at the international level for the welfare of children. May they work to maintain the momentum of IYC, benefit from the experiences of the Year, and avoid all spirit of competition and jealousy.

I am thinking, furthermore, that a time may come when it is desirable to have special ad hoc international NGO mechanisms to accomplish well-defined aims on children's behalf, limited in scope and time. A careful study of the origins of the NGO/IYC Committee, its outlook, its modest ambitions, its spirit of co-operation, both its realism and its idealism, might prove an excellent guide to those who will have the opportunity to render great service to humankind at the international level.

All those who were involved in IYC both on the United Nations side and on the NGO side, at the international and at the national levels, wish to keep the momentum and the spirit of the Year alive in the coming decades. The report which follows will surely be a useful tool in the attainment of this worthwhile objective.

Canon Joseph Moerman
Vice-Chairperson
NGO Committee on UNICEF
(former Chairperson, NGO/IYC Committee)

Introduction

1. This report is divided into three parts. Part I reviews the formation and functioning of the NGO/IYC Committee, including information about its membership, meetings, publications and working groups. Part II analyses NGO participation in the Year, discussing NGO activities at local, national and international levels and highlighting a few major areas of NGO concern. Part III suggests the kinds of services and follow-up actions necessary to encourage future NGO activity on behalf of children. The following introductory paragraphs will indicate the key role NGOs played in initiating and securing international support for the Year.

2. On 21 December 1976, the General Assembly at its thirty-first session, passed a resolution declaring an International Year of the Child (IYC) in 1979 (resolution 31/169). Two paragraphs of that resolution referred specifically to the contribution that NGOs could make to the success of IYC. One expressed the General Assembly's awareness that "for an international year to be effective, adequate preparation and the widespread support of Governments, non-governmental organizations, and the public will be required" (preambular paragraph 8). The second invited" non-governmental organizations and the public to participate actively in the International Year of the Child and to co-ordinate their programmes for the Year as fully as possible, especially at the national level" (operative paragraph 6).

3. The explicit references made to NGOs in this General Assembly resolution reflect the prominent role of NGOs in the efforts that led to the declaration of an International Year of the Child. The very idea of a year for children took root and flourished in the NGO community long before it was officially adopted by the United Nations.

4. The concept of launching an International Year of the Child took shape at the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB) at the end of 1972. A first letter was addressed to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in January 1973. The idea was suppported immediately by the International Union for Child Welfare (IUCW), and soon many other international non-governmental organizations came forward to join the ICCB and the IUCW. Two preliminary committees of NGOs were established to promote the project: a committee within the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (CONGO) in Geneva, and a sub-committee within the NGO Committee on UNICEF, which was located in New York at UNICEF headquarters.

5. A small secretariat was set up in Geneva for the CONGO-organized IYC Committee which played a dynamic role in the promotion of the project. The secretariat was located in the headquarters of the ICCB with Canon Joseph Moerman, Secretary-General of the ICCB, given responsibility for it.

6. These two committees sensitized and mobilized NGOs, made Governments aware of the project, sought the accord of the United Nations and its diverse specialized agencies, informed the public, published articles, organized press conferences, gave interviews, etc. In addition, oral and written interventions were made by Canon Moerman at the meeting of the UNICEF Executive Board in 1975 and 1976, and at the Economic and Social Council in 1974 and 1976. The then Chairman of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, Mrs. Mildred Jones (World YWCA), also addressed the UNICEF Executive Board on this subject in 1974 and 1975. During this same period other ad hoc groups, through mail campaigns and personal contacts, undertook to draw attention to the proposal and garner the support of influential people world-wide.

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Introduction

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7. All the statements made by members of the NGO community during this period emphasized the enthusiasm with which NGOs were responding to the idea of IYC. In 1975, when the ICCB and IUCW submitted a formal proposal for the Year (E/ICEF/L.1331) to the UNICEF Executive Board, they stressed three major ways in which NGOs could contribute to the IYC effort:

(a) By supplementing and extending official programmes with additional manpower, communication networks, funds, etc.;

(b) By involving large numbers of people at the community level and thereby creating greater awareness of children's needs and special problems;

(c) By sharing their knowledge of local situations, customs and peoples and helping to implement large-scale person-to-person contacts.

8. The United Nations bodies and agencies which considered the IYC proposal were keenly aware of NGO interest in the Year. This awareness, and the determination to capture the growing NGO enthusiasm, is clearly manifested in the recommendations and resolutions made by these various bodies. The emphasis placed on NGO support in the General Assembly resolution was no surprise - it grew out of an increasing recognition that NGO participation was essential to the success of the IYC effort.

I. NGOs ORGANIZE FOR IYC: THE FORMATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

9. The need for an international non-governmental structure was apparent to both the United Nations and NGO communities. As a result, representatives of over 85 international organizations met at United Nations Headquarters on 27 and 28 June 1977 to form the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations for the International Year of the Child (NGO/IYC Committee), absorbing and superseding the two preliminary committees. The NGO/IYC Committee brought together three different groupings of organizations: the NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC (CONGO), the NGO Committee on UNICEF and the NGO (UNESCO) Standing Committee. It was the first time that these three groups had worked together to promote the establishment of one overall committee.

10. Canon Moerman, in recognition of his role in initiating and bringing to fruition the concept of an IYC, was elected Chairperson by acclamation. Mrs. Helaine Plaut (International Council of Jewish Women) and Mrs. Monique Gregoire (International Centre of Films for Children and Young People) were elected Vice-Chairpersons. In this way, all three of the NGO groupings which initiated the Committee were represented among its three principal officers (i.e., Canon Moerman from CONGO, Helaine Plaut from the NGO Committee on UNICEF and Monique Gregoire from the NGO (UNESCO) Standing Committee).

11. A co-ordinating group of eight international organizations, designed to examine questions related to the Committee and decide on its most effective functioning, was also nominated and approved at the June 1977 meeting. The following eight organizations, including two youth organizations, were named to serve on the Co-ordinating Group: Associated Country Women of the World, International Council on Social Welfare, International Union for Child Welfare, League of Red Cross Societies, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (World Council of Churches), the Women's International Democratic Federation, the World Scout Bureau/World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (a joint membership), and the World Assembly of Youth. The World Assembly of Youth was replaced in 1979 by the International Committee of Children's and Adolescent Movements (CIMEA).

12. In addition to making a number of organizational decisions, participants at the June 1977 meeting outlined the purposes and objectives of the NGO/IYC Committee's work. First, it was agreed that the Committee was primarily a facilitating mechanism and would therefore not take positions on matters of substance. NGOs wishing to adopt a position on any given issue could do so in the name of the organizations involved but not on behalf of the NGO/IYC Committee.

13. Furthermore, it was decided that the NGO/IYC Committee should encourage NGO participation in IYC by:

(a) Facilitating the exchange of information among NGOs in order to stimulate IYC activities, avoid duplication of effort, and encourage co-operative efforts;

(b) Serving as a channel for dissemination of information and for communication between the NGOs and the IYC secretariat of the United Nations. This did not of course preclude direct contacts between an NGO and the secretariat;

(c) Encouraging, through international NGOs, the full participation of NGOs at the national, regional and local levels.

Secretariat of the NGO/IYC Committee

14. Two offices of the Committee were set up shortly after its establishment in June 1977. One office was located within the ICCB secretariat in Geneva (65, rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva) under the direction of Canon Moerman. The other was established in New York in space provided by the United Nations IYC secretariat (866 United Nations Plaza, New York 10017) headed by Mrs. Plaut. For most of its existence, two full-time people and one part-time person staffed the office in Geneva and two full-time people serviced the Committee in New York. The Committee did have the services of a larger staff for some shorter periods, 1/ but for the most part the Committee's staff consisted of less than five people altogether. The Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Committee volunteered their services.

1/ For example, a third full-time person joined the New York staff from June 1979 to June 1980.

Duration of the Committee

15. The Committee formally remained in existence from June 1977 until December 1980. From May to December 1980 it phased out its New York office, but the staff in Geneva remained intact until the Committee disbanded in December. The officers of the Committee and the organizations elected to the Co-ordinating Group served in those capacities for the full three and one half years of the Committee's existence.

Membership of the Committee

16. At the June 1977 meeting it was agreed that membership on the Committee would be open to all NGOs in consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and/or to the United Nations specialized agencies. Membership was also open to other NGOs "international in character" and with a special interest in the welfare of children. All other groups having a genuine concern for child welfare were invited to become correspondents of the Committee. Both members and correspondents were asked to make an annual contribution to the Committee, but these contributions covered only a small fraction of the Committee's budget. Details about the Committee's expenses and financing are given in paragraphs 33 and 34 of this report.

17. Although the Committee consisted of about 150 members and 100 correspondents, by the end of 1979 its outreach was actually much larger than this would suggest. In an effort to reach as many organizations and individuals as possible, the Committee disseminated general information to all groups who requested it regardless of their formal connections to the United Nations system. The Committee also sought to keep the National IYC Commissions, National Committees for UNICEF and a number of United Nations departments and agencies informed of its work. As a result, the mailing list of the Committee had reached close to 1,100 addresses by the end of 1979.

18. The members and correspondents of the NGO/IYC Committee encompassed a wide variety of organizations. They included not only those that had traditionally been interested in UNICEF's work, but also several women's and environment movements, student and youth organizations, co-operatives, labour, farm and business groups, and professional associations, many of which initiated or expanded child-related programmes as a result of IYC.

Meetings of the Committee

19. In addition to the founding meeting, in June 1977, the Committee held annual plenary sessions in 1978, 1979 and 1980. The June 1977 meeting was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the 1978 and 1979 plenary sessions took place in Geneva in the ILO building and in May 1980 the NGO/IYC Committee returned once again to United Nations Headquarters for its final session. The emphasis of the plenary sessions differed each year, but a major purpose of each one was to bring NGOs together from all over the world to share information and experience on programmes for children and to foster co-operation between organizations whenever possible. The 1979 and 1980 plenary sessions of the Committee gave special consideration to plans and strategies aimed at ensuring adequate NGO follow-up to IYC. The decisions taken at the final plenary in this regard will be discussed at length in part III of this report.

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20. Although the Committee did not as a rule organize meetings on substantive issues, the New York secretariat did sponsor, in co-operation with the Johnson Foundation and the United States Committee for UNICEF, a symposium on uprooted children in November 1978. As part of its efforts both to place the child at the centre of attention and to highlight the problems of the most disadvantaged among them, the Committee secretariat selected uprooted children as one group needing closer study and improved services at local, national and international levels. Participants in the symposium were selected for their special experience with migrant children in both sending and receiving countries in North America and Europe. They represented Governments, international and national social service agencies, and intergovernmental organizations such as UNICEF. A report of the symposium discussions and recommendations was issued by the Johnson Foundation 2/ and distributed by the Committee to all its members and correspondents, to IYC National Commissions and to the members of the IYC Advisory Group.

Co-ordinating Group of the Committee

21. As stated earlier (paragraph 11) a Co-ordinating Group of eight organizations was appointed at the June 1977 meeting. Organizations agreeing to serve on the Co-ordinating Group were requested to arrange for representation in both New York and Geneva. The Co-ordinating Group met at least twice a year, once on each side of the Atlantic. Bearing in mind the three functions of the Committee outlined earlier, the Co-ordinating Group examined questions related to the work of the Committee, prepared the financial reports and budgets for submission to the plenary, and gave guidance and advice to the Committee secretariat on an ongoing basis. All the actions and decisions of the Co-ordinating Group were reported to the entire membership of the Committee through the periodic mailings of the secretariat and at its annual plenary sessions.

22. The Co-ordinating Group was also responsible for approving the proposals of several organizations for working groups and joint programmes. Information on the criteria used for its decisions in this regard is provided below.

2/ Uprooted Children: A Wingspread Report. Johnson Foundation (Racine, Wisconsin), November 1978.

Working groups of the Committee

23. At the June 1977 meeting it was decided that organizations interested in similar issues would be invited to form working groups on those subjects. In March 1978, after consultation with the Co-ordinating Group, the Committee secretariat sent out a document containing guidelines for the functioning of working groups (document 77/19-NGO/IYC/22). In the preliminary note to that document, the purposes of the working groups from the Committee's point of view were clearly stated:

> "The working groups are being set up with an eye to efficiency and therefore to flexibility. They are not born of a priori categories but develop empirically from the express desire of certain NGOs to work together in various fields of IYC activity. Insofar as possible, then, we respect the categories suggested by those submitting proposals for working groups. It is the task of the Committee to avoid duplication of effort and, where indicated, to draw the attention of the NGOs concerned to the possibility of such duplication.
>
> "The notion of flexibility includes, among other things, the possibility of establishing subgroups within a working group."

24. Specifically, in considering proposals for working groups, the Co-ordinating Group agreed on the following points:

(a) The subject-matter of a working group should be international, and members of the group should be primarily international NGOs, although a working group could decide to include other especially qualified non-governmental groups;

(b) At least one organization must be prepared to accept responsibility for the functioning of the working group;

(c) Working groups must avoid duplicating the work of another group either within the NGO/IYC Committee or elsewhere;

(d) Working groups should have concrete objectives. The nature of the work might be research or it might be more action-oriented, but the objectives should be clear in advance and relate directly to the improvement of the situation of children.

25. By the beginning of 1979, working groups had been formed on the following: the handicapped child (with a subgroup on stigmatized children); the rights of the child (with a subgroup on children of migrants); children of the fourth world; children and their surroundings (with a subgroup on safety of children in traffic); education; parenthod and the care of the child (with a subgroup on responsible parenthood); and children's movements.

26. Within the general guidelines set down by the Committee the working groups developed very different objectives and methods of work. Each working group submitted a written progress report to the annual plenaries of the NGO/IYC Committee. 3/ While there is clear evidence that in several cases the working group played a significant role in increasing the scope of NGO services to particular groups of children, in others the groups lacked the resources and personnel necessary to achieve their original objectives. More stringent evaluation of working group proposals might have identified these weaknesses before the group began its operations. If some of the groups were not able to do as much as they would have wished in stimulating and co-ordinating concrete activities, they did at least provide the occasion for some lasting and productive contacts. Several of them issued very useful documents in their fields.

Joint programmes of the Committee

27. By mid-1978, several organizations had brought the attention of the Committee secretariat to programmes they had initiated individually but for which they welcomed the collaboration of other NGOs. The Committee secretariat circulated information about these "joint programmes" to all its members and correspondents, explaining that the sponsoring organizations desired to increase the effectiveness of their efforts by enlisting the aid of other NGOs interested in the subject.

28. Several joint programmes were approved and in operation by the beginning of 1979. They included, among others, projects relating to reforestation, education, protection of children's rights, and the promotion of international understanding.

Publications of the Committee

29. As one means of carrying out its co-ordinating function, the NGO/IYC Committee secretariat issued two editions (in January 1978 and February 1979) of A Compendium of the Activities and Programmes of Non-Governmental Organizations in the International Year of the Child. Over 50 entries appeared in the 1978 edition and over 130 were included in the 1979 volume. Both were given wide distribution to Governments, National IYC Commissions, members of the NGO/IYC Committee and other sectors of the NGO community.

30. In addition to these two publications, the Committee distributed a series of informational letters regarding Committee policies, the activities of various NGOs, opportunities for NGO co-operation with each other as well as with the United Nations, the travels of the Special Representative for IYC, and the services/materials offered by the IYC secretariat. The Committee also issued a brochure discussing its activities, lists of NGO publications on certain subjects and a "think-piece" on the participation of children in IYC.

3/ These reports and all other publications of the Committee are available from the secretariat of the International Catholic Child Bureau (65, rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland).

Liaison with the United Nations

31. On questions relating to the Year of the Child, the NGO/IYC Committee served as the primary liaison between the United Nations and the NGO community. It carried out this function largely through its daily, informal working relationships with the IYC secretariat and the lead agency. More formally, the Chairman of the Committee submitted a report to the UNICEF Executive Board in 1978, 1979 and 1980.

32. The Committee also helped other United Nations agencies get information to the NGOs involved in IYC and kept them informed of what NGOs were doing. This was done both through mailings and through the Committee's membership on the inter-agency IYC Advisory Group. The Committee was represented at all its meetings, usually by the Chairperson and one or both of the Vice-Chairpersons. At each meeting there was a report on NGO activities.

Financing of the Committee

33. Although the Committee formally existed from mid-1977 to mid-1980 (extended to December 1980), the Committee's accounts run from January 1978 to December 1980. In 1977 the costs of the Committee were covered by the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), one of the original sponsors of the Year.

34. The total cost of running the Committee for this three year period was approximately $371,000. 4/ Of that amount, approximatly $135,000 (or 33.47 per cent of the total costs) was contributed by UNICEF, $36,088 (or 9.74 per cent of the total costs) was collected as members' and correspondents' dues and special contributions, and $150,000 (or 40.45 per cent of the total costs) was raised directly by Canon Moerman, Chairperson of the Committee, mostly through his contacts with European foundations. In addition, 13.34 per cent of the costs was covered by sales of IYC memorabilia, grants from United States foundations, and small gifts from businesses and individuals. It is important to note that costs relating to office expenditures are considerably lower than they would have been had not ICCB housed the Geneva secretariat of the Committee and the IYC secretariat provided space and supporting services for the Committee's New York office.

Evaluation procedure followed by the Committee

35. At its April 1979 plenary session the NGO/IYC Committee adopted a set of guidelines for NGO reporting on IYC. The secretariat then requested all Committee members and correspondents to submit a written evaluation report corresponding to these guidelines by 15 March 1980. On the basis of those reports an analysis of NGO activity in the Year was submitted to the plenary session of the NGO/IYC Committee in May 1980. This document, entitled "Evaluation of NGO Involvement in the International Year of the Child: What for the Child Tomorrow?" (document 80/13-NGO/IYC/120), included a description of NGO activities, an analysis of their effectiveness, and recommendations to ensure continued NGO activitiy with and for children.

4/ The accounts were kept in Swiss francs. Dollar equivalents were calculated at the exchange rate for 31 December 1980: $US 1 - SFR 1.75.

II. ANALYSIS OF NGO PARTICIPATION IN THE YEAR

Introduction

36. The previous section of this report outlined the origin, organization and methods of work of the NGO/IYC Committee. The present one describes the activities of the larger NGO community. It is important to keep in mind the following points when reading this section:

(a) This report is not presented as a "final evaluation" of NGO activities in IYC. A large proportion of the NGO programmes begun during the Year are long-term ones and their impact will not be felt for a number of years to come. In addition, the NGOs who during IYC "discovered" the relevance of their work to the situation of children, are just beginning to formulate programmes which reflect their new pro-child emphasis.

(b) IYC blurred some of the traditional distinctions between "governmental" and "non-governmental" and transcended many of the rigid categories separating organizations according to official status with the United Nations, national and/or international connections, etc. The essence of the IYC message was "strength through unity and co-operation", an idea to which NGOs responded enthusiastically. NGOs both within and across national boundaries engaged in unprecedented levels of co-operation and established contacts which have yielded and will continue to yield improved children's services at every level. United Nations bodies have recognized the potential contribution from individual organizations as well as from newly formed NGO coalitions and working groups.

(c) Nothing in this report should be interpreted as implying that the NGO/IYC Committee was responsible for all the NGO activity in IYC. The IYC secretariat was instrumental in stimulating much activity in the NGO sector, as were National IYC Commissions and various offices of UNICEF. The international NGOs stimulated their national and, in turn, local branches. Some NGOs making important contributions to IYC were not among the members and correspondents of the Committee. For example, several active service clubs worked directly with the IYC secretariat or UNICEF. Through their many affiliates they raised funds, disseminated information on children and undertook projects in the field that reached millions of children.

(d) A problem of definition arises in attempting to survey what NGOs did in IYC, since there is a tendency to classify every child-related programme undertaken in the last three years as an IYC activity. Obviously a large number of NGO projects for children would have taken place anyway. There is no point in trying to make judgements on this. A more important question to ask about these projects is: "Were they strengthened, expanded or given wider exposure because of IYC?"

Action at local, national and international levels

37. The differences in NGO activity at local, national and international levels were significant, both in analysing what NGOs have already done and in suggesting ways they might further develop their child-related programmes. The following paragraphs review the ways NGOs worked at these levels during IYC.

Local level

38. From the beginning, IYC planners hoped that the Year would result in the permanent improvement of children's services at national and local levels. Intergovernmental bodies, National Commissions and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) were encouraged to stimulate the interest and commitment of national and/or community groups and to provide these groups with adequate support to carry out action programmes. The information reaching the NGO/IYC Committee on the results of these efforts, as well as those of local groups not formally connected to national or international bodies, was overwhelming. Although it would be impossible to list all these projects or to enumerate the hundreds of services provided by community organizations, the range of activities undertaken was impressive.

39. In many cases, programmes undertaken by NGOs at the local level were responses to immediate community needs. In developing areas, for example, day-care facilities were provided, health clinics were built, literacy programmes and child-care courses were initiated. In industrialized communities local groups organized after-school activities, started parenthood education programmes, and campaigned against the exposure of children to violence and pornography, among other efforts. In addition, local groups published newsletters to inform their communities about the needs of children and the steps being taken to meet those needs; they formed pressure groups which lobbied public authorities for much needed grants and services; they celebrated the crucial importance of children to the future of the community; and they organized work parties to build or improve playgrounds and educational facilities. A number of projects which were begun before 1979 received higher priority - and were therefore completed - during IYC; others resulted from community action stimulated by the Year.

40. Although the type of activity varied greatly, the emphasis of local groups was consistently on broad-based community consultation, involving the planners, appropriate public authorities, and the people most directly affected by the project (e.g., women's groups seeking more adequate water supplies and children who assisted in identifying traffic hazards in their neighbourhoods). In some cases, surveys were undertaken to determine the priority of various community needs; in others the most pressing problems were obvious to local planners. The projects undertaken were, for the most part, concrete and realistic. Judging from the results achieved from often minuscule budgets, resources were used effectively, channelled directly to the projects concerned without getting lost in complicated administrative or bureaucratic machinery.

41. The similarity between programmes undertaken at community levels in developed and developing countries was striking. The exact nature of the programmes differed, but the activities themselves revealed a commonality of problems and the effectiveness of united community efforts in solving them. The provision of adequate day-care and recreational facilities, the improvement of nutrition standards, the better training of young people for their role as parents, the sensitization of public authorities to the needs and rights of children, and the involvement of children in the identification of their own needs were all common themes of the local-level projects initiated during IYC.

42. The importance of these community efforts has often been underestimated. There is a tendency to measure the success of IYC on the basis of visible national or international achievements. While there have been significant developments on these levels, the potentially long-term benefits of local initiatives must also be recognized. The fruits of some community projects are already being enjoyed by millions of parents and children. In communities throughout the world some children have safer places to play, better-equipped schools and more adequate diets as a result of activities undertaken during the Year. Equally important are the efforts of local pressure groups which have worked and will continue to press for improvements in the health, safety and general well-being of children and their families. The full value of their contribution will undoubtedly unfold in the decades that lie ahead.

National level

43. Throughout IYC, the contribution of NGOs on the national level was twofold: (a) they stimulated and co-ordinated many of the local initiatives cited above; and (b) they spearheaded country-wide programmes in a number of areas, both independently and as members of larger NGO coalitions. The following paragraphs summarize the programmes of NGOs at this level.

National Commissions

44. Responding to UNICEF's emphasis on the national focus of IYC, INGOs encouraged their national affiliates first to urge Governments to set up IYC Commissions and then to co-operate with these Commissions once they were established. In some cases NGOs acted as the driving force behind the creation of Commissions; in others, groupings of national NGOs served as a focal point of IYC activity in both the governmental and non-governmental spheres.

45. NGOs benefited from their co-operation with National Commissions in a number of ways. In several countries NGOs interested in children came together for the first time and subsequently developed very effective working relationships with government departments and ministries. A number of NGOs are convinced this would not have been possible had they not approached national authorities as a group representing a broad range of public opinion and children's concerns. The formation of coalitions strengthened the position of individual NGOs vis-à-vis national authorities and facilitated the high level of NGO-government collaboration that characterized IYC.

46. NGOs also made substantial contributions to the work of National Commissions. They raised funds, increased public support and provided technical as well as professional expertise. The competence of NGOs in child-related areas impressed some Governments to the extent that they began to consult NGOs more regularly. As a result of this mutually beneficial experience, in many instances, NGOs are continuing such collaboration with the successor bodies to National IYC Commissions.

National Committees for UNICEF

47. NGOs also increased their co-operation with UNICEF National Committees as a result of IYC. Involvement with National IYC Commissions enhanced ongoing efforts to support Committees for UNICEF through advocacy, fund-raising and public information campaigns. In fact, a number of joint NGO/National Committee projects were initiated, several of them involving the planning and implementation of very successful nation-wide development education programmes.

National NGO coalitions

48. The formation of national-level NGO coalitions was a major innovation of the Year. NGOs gained much from the exchange of information and the sharing of resources that resulted from these joint efforts. In their evaluation reports to the NGO/IYC Committee, they listed both the advantages and the inevitable difficulties of working in these coalitions, but they expressed a strong desire to continue meeting, both formally and informally, in the future.

49. Several NGO coalitions conducted nation-wide reviews of the problems facing children (e.g., in Canada, France and the United Kingdom). Since a number of NGOs included professionals, local authorities, and policy makers in their membership, and therefore received first-hand information from the individuals or groups directly involved in implementing children's services (judges, lawyers, social workers, health workers, etc.), the coalitions were able to compile comprehensive, multisectoral reports on the situation of their nation's children. In addition, NGOs with large grass-roots membership got feedback from the general population, the users of children's services (parents, community groups, etc.). Several of these reports were completed during or shortly after IYC and presented to National Commissions, government ministries, and agencies of the United Nations system at various points. These reports complement the national reviews being conducted by government bodies and were recognized as valuable contributions. NGOs, both individually and as members of larger groups, have expressed their intention to continue this work.

50. Although the activities of national NGOs were again far too varied to list or discuss in detail, a few subjects assumed particular priority. Three of those areas are discussed below.

Legislation

51. In their evaluation reports to the NGO/IYC Committee, a number of NGOs cited legislative change as one of their most pressing follow-up priorities. National coalitions of NGOs greatly improved their effectiveness in this domain. In serving as broad-based pressure groups, they made legislators more knowledgeable about the needs of children and effected changes such as improved traffic regulations, more protective child labour laws, better supervised child-care institutions, more co-ordinated adoption and foster-care systems, and more resources earmarked for children in international assistance programmes. Large numbers of NGOs and coalitions of NGOs will continue to press for legislative change as part of their ongoing programme.

Media support

52. NGOs reported a substantial increase in their contacts with the media as a result of IYC. They emphasized the strong relationship between support from the media and the effectiveness of their programmes, i.e., when the media publicized and gave enthusiastic coverage to their activities, the chances of capturing both public and governmental attention were considerably greater. A number of NGOs developed good working relationships with journalists, editors, and radio and television producers, and they will continue to draw upon these new contacts in implementing post-IYC programmes. The NGO community welcomed governmental and/or intergovernmental efforts to sensitize the media to children's needs and stands ready to act as a partner in this effort. One example is the NGO world's readiness to participate in the WHO campaign to inform the public of the relationship between smoking and children's health.

Development education

53. One of the great strengths of NGOs, particularly in industrialized countries, is their ability to generate support among large segments of the public. Considering it one aspect of their role as child advocates, a number of NGOs have traditionally devoted time and resources to educating both children and adults about the conditions under which other children live around the world. Several organizations intensified their development education efforts during IYC and benefited immensely from the materials produced and distributed by UNICEF in this regard. Indeed, some NGOs seem to have "discovered" UNICEF through its development education materials and expect to continue emphasizing this area in the future.

International level

54. NGO activities on the international level fell into four categories. First, they encouraged activities by their national affiliates as well as directly carrying out IYC-related activities. The overwhelming grass-roots response to IYC was at least partially attributable to the work of international organizations. Second, they joined forces with other INGOs in building information-sharing networks, organizing regional and international meetings and carrying out operational projects. Third, NGOs increased their activity on regional levels. Finally, INGOs reached a new level of co-operation with United Nations bodies in child-related fields.

55. To encourage their national affiliates to expand their ongoing programmes for children and to initiate new activities, some INGOs offered special assistance to child-related projects and are continuing to promote innovative approaches at national and community levels. In addition, INGOs put more value on joint efforts and spearheaded the formation of national coalitions such as those mentioned above. Co-operation among national affiliates of individual INGOs also expanded; this collaboration resulted in a number of specific projects and contributed to more effective NGO efforts at the regional level. This was illustrated by the increasing number of mutual assistance projects and twinning arrangements between affiliates in different regions.

56. In some cases INGOs stimulated child-related projects by adopting a global, child-related "theme" for IYC. They produced appropriate resource kits and programme aids for use in different countries and kept abreast of the many ways their members responded to the theme. Some NGOs extended their IYC themes beyond 1979. Festivals and celebrations, held simultaneously in various countries, were also organized (e.g., International Children's Book Day, Save the Children Day, Order of the Smile Award in Poland). These and other country-level programmes, as well as international activities like children's camps and congresses, were given extensive coverage in the journals and newsletters of the INGOs concerned.

57. A considerable number of organizations held international conferences and seminars on child-related issues. These meetings included representatives of national affiliates, government and United Nations officials, and experts in the topics being discussed. They were often action-oriented and served both to co-ordinate national activities and to exchange knowledge and experience between countries. Several INGOs developed medium- and long-range work plans as a result of these meetings in IYC and many indicated their intention to hold similar gatherings later to monitor the progress of efforts initiated during IYC.

58. A number of these conferences were sponsored by two or more organizations. INGOs have expanded their contacts with one another and begun to build information-sharing networks on several specific issues (e.g., on the role of play in children's development). To a greater extent than before NGOs on the international level co-ordinated their responses to the needs of certain children (e.g., unaccompanied minors among refugee populations). The working groups of the NGO/IYC Committee also acted as forums for information exchange.

59. Some permanent groups of INGOs undertook special activities in observance of IYC. The NGO Standing Committee of UNESCO formed a working group on IYC which asked each of its members to contribute a specific project or issue paper on a child-related issue, urged UNESCO to strengthen its programmes for children, and organized a major symposium on children in March 1980. The NGO Committee on UNICEF and its several sub-committees continued their ongoing efforts on behalf of children, particularly in areas of traditional concern to UNICEF, and gave IYC extensive coverage in the NGO/IYC Newsletter. The Conference of NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO) also encouraged its members to expand their child-related programmes. The CONGO Sub-Committee on Racism and De-Colonization, together with the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid, sponsored an international seminar on children under apartheid in June 1979.

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60. Given the similarity of children's problems within different regions, it was encouraging to note the expansion of collaboration among NGOs and between NGOs and intergovernmental organizations at the regional level. In Europe, for example, NGOs were actively associated with the Council of Europe in its work on family policy, the young child, equal opportunities for girls and children of the fourth world. One international professional organization, conscious of the force that women represent in Africa, encouraged an African woman who had long been active in the organization to produce a small newsletter on IYC for her African women colleagues scattered in cities and rural villages all over the continent. Filled with news and information especially relevant to women and children in Africa, the newsletter became the basis of an informal regional network which provides personal and professional reinforcement to each recipient in her work with the children of her own country.

61. Largely as a result of IYC, many NGOs increased their efforts to collaborate with UNICEF. In their evaluation reports to the NGO/IYC Committee an overwhelming number of NGOs expressed their support for UNICEF as the lead agency for children within the United Nations system. They are counting on continued contact with UNICEF as they pursue their advocacy and fund-raising campaigns and carry through on operational projects undertaken in connection with the Year. A number of international organizations are becoming more involved with the UNICEF Greeting Card Operation and encouraging their affiliates to increase co-operation with National Committees for UNICEF and field offices at the country level.

62. NGO co-operation with other United Nations bodies also intensified. For instance, one world youth movement worked with UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF and several specialized NGOs to prepare a community health kit for use in developing countries. Several NGOs are building upon ILO's work on child labour by gathering data, providing case-studies and advocating programmes to protect the children most affected by exploitative practices. NGOs are also increasing their co-operation with UNHCR in response to the growing need for funds, relief supplies and technical support (e.g., some NGOs have seconded medical personnel and social workers to serve in refugee camps).

General observations

The nature of NGO participation

63. Even a cursory review of NGO activity at local, national and international levels suggests a number of observations. First, the activities undertaken at each level were at the same time different and interdependent. Local groups tended to focus on small, specific responses to felt needs. National groups supported these community projects and also tried to achieve broader aims (e.g., the passage of legislation guaranteeing primary education to all children rather than the provision of school facilities for just one village). International organizations gave financial and technical assistance to these national groups and linked them into an international network which fortified their individual efforts.

64. Second, it was demonstrated that co-operation among NGOs, and between NGOs and Governments, can improve the quality and scope of services offered to children. This collaboration proved especially fruitful when concentrated on specific issues and helped uncover the breadth of NGO expertise.

65. Third, the decentralized nature of IYC enhanced NGO participation. The absence of an international conference allowed organizations to devote their full energy and resources to substantive programmes and to the direct improvement of children's services. Free of international "plans of action" which can detract from the identification of problems specific to certain areas, NGOs and Governments were able to focus on local and national concerns and respond more directly.

Main areas of NGO activity

66. The majority of NGO programmes were aimed at the most deprived children and inevitably centred on the basic, still-urgent needs of children in such familiar areas as maternal and child health, nutrition, and education. Widespread attention was also given to special groups of children whose needs are particularly urgent. These include refugee, migrant and handicapped children. Maltreatment of children and child labour were other areas of major concern to NGOs.

67. A leitmotiv common to almost all these NGO programmes, world-wide, was concern for the family. Singling out the child for attention, far from detracting from the family as some feared, put the spotlight on it as never before. NGO programmes in dozens of areas - nutrition education, immunization, early childhood education, and the effects of the media on children, safety in traffic, reading, prevention of alcohol abuse or smoking, education in human rights, education for non-violent resolution of conflict - all these disparate programmes recognized the need to reach the child through the family and to do everything possible to reinforce and support the family's role.

68. In addition, IYC stimulated an intensified search for groups of "forgotten children", those with special needs that government programmes may not include unless some organized group speaks up for them. These groups often face similar problems in a number of different countries or regions. Examples of groups which benefited from NGO programmes during IYC include children of prisoners and children in prison, children of the fourth world, stigmatized children, "latchkey" children, gypsy children, seafarers' children, children of isolated mountain areas and children in arctic regions.

69. There was also a tendency to focus on more specialized programme areas. For example, the concept of children's rights was examined more closely. Many specialized NGOs addressed themselves to a specific right or to the rights of children in specific situations where they could take practical steps to bring about improvement. Some programmes reflecting this tendency were those on the rights of children in care, the rights of children who have leprosy or have leprosy in their family, the rights of children in psychotherapy, the rights of children who are performing artists, the rights of children in international custody disputes, the rights of stateless children, children's spiritual rights, etc.

70. While certain NGOs took a very specialized view of children's problems, others worked at the opposite end of the spectrum to view children in relation to the broader social, economic, political and moral questions of our time. Children were considered not only in the context of the family and society, but in relation to changes in the role of women, development strategies, disarmament and human rights. Other programmes dealt with children subject to military training, children under apartheid, children as victims or authors of violence, education for peace and international understanding, etc., and many of them are being continued.

71. Finally, in their evaluation reports to the NGO/IYC Committee, NGOs credited IYC with having made it possible to discuss more openly certain subjects that formerly were kept hidden. They cited as examples female excision, child prostitution, and other practices involving traffic in children.

Obstacles and strengths encountered by NGOs during IYC

72. In their reports to the NGO/IYC Committee, their international headquarters and National Commissions, NGOs noted both the obstacles they encountered and the strengths they discovered in their IYC activities. Their analyses varied according to the nature of the NGOs involved and the kinds of activities they initiated. In some cases the same factor is mentioned as an obstacle from one point of view and as a strength from another perspective, so categorizing these factors under "obstacles" or "strengths" becomes rather arbitrary. Nonetheless the following paragraphs review the factors that appear most often in NGO reports and analyse the positive and negative reactions associated with each one.

Obstacles

Financial

73. The lack of financial resources was the obstacle NGOs cited most often when they analysed their IYC programmes. In many cases, relatively small amounts of assistance (e.g., a vehicle to transport people and equipment, or a small printing press for the production of simple reading materials) could have made a great difference. At the national and local levels funds or assistance in kind were needed to implement action programmes such as those outlined above; at the international level, NGOs felt the need to increase the support services offered to national affiliates (e.g., distribution of documents in a greater number of languages or the provision of more specialized technical assistance). NGOs appreciated the increased amount of resources allocated for children during IYC in some countries, but they emphasized that this trend must continue if the long-term programmes begun during the year are to be fully realized.

74. During IYC several Governments (e.g., Canada, Australia and Nigeria, among others) set up funds from which small grants were made to various non-governmental groups for carrying out projects for children, mostly at the subnational and community levels. IYC also saw a great increase in "people-to-people" assistance on small projects (e.g., a women's group in a European city provided funds for a Braille printing machine to be sent to a school for blind children in Africa, a local NGO branch in Sweden equipped a pre-school centre in Botswana). It also pointed out the need for a more systematic way of identifying worthy projects and potential donors, arranging for contracts between the two, and evaluating the eventual outcomes of this type of assistance.

75. NGOs expressed their concern that financial constraints would increase in the years of economic crisis that lay ahead. Many described as "urgent" the need for both Governments and NGOs to rethink the use and distribution of the resources that might be available.

Political

76. Although IYC was greeted with enthusiasm by most Governments, NGOs in some countries felt that government support was more token than real. Even in countries where Governments were sincerely committed to realizing the objectives of IYC, a great deal of persuasion was necessary before they recognized certain needs (e.g., the value of programmes for gifted children). Many responded only to initiatives geared to the physical survival of children. While NGOs appreciated that priority should be given to "survival services", their programmes were often aimed at meeting intellectual, emotional and social needs as well.

77. Some national NGOs saw their programmes hindered by political instability. Others felt Governments deliberately blocked programmes that threatened entrenched interests (e.g., resistance to child labour reforms). Anticipating such conflicts, some Governments limited the extent to which NGOs could participate in the work of National IYC Commissions, and they are continuing to exclude them from high-level policy-making groups responsible for the IYC follow-up.

78. More often, however, NGOs described governmental obstacles not in terms of encountering opposition but as failure to carry through on commitments to children. One national NGO officer in Asia, commenting on government support for IYC in his country, wrote that "The Year began here with a bang - yes, fireworks - but ended with a whimper".

Gaps in popular support

79. In many cases, gaining the support and confidence of the general public also proved difficult. Vague expressions of commitment to improved children's services were not always translated into solid political pressure, financial support or other forms of co-operation. A few NGOs also mentioned the lack of financial and technical assistance from the business sector of their communities. Business groups, as the IYC experience in some places showed, can contribute a great deal to programmes for children (e.g., by sponsoring events, raising money, or donating equipment, services, expertise and much-needed materials). Some NGOs are now studying this question to see how they can tap the resources of this sector and make better use of the good will that unquestionably exists there. Thus, although NGOs welcomed the interest and participation IYC generated, they also stressed the gaps in this popular support and the need to continue cultivating it in the future.

NGO collaboration

80. A number of NGOs were dissatisfied with the scope and quality of the co-operation they received from other organizations during IYC. Among the reasons given for this were: the tendency of NGOs to spread their resources too thinly; the reluctance of some organizations to enter into co-operative arrangements which involve considerable sharing of resources and information; and the difficulty of reaching consensus in groups which include NGOs with diverse objectives and priorities. If IYC illustrated the benefits of NGO co-operation, for many NGOs it also laid bare the difficulties. There were problems of inter-NGO rivalry, jealousy and "empire-building". These problems, if identified accurately and confronted directly, can lead to greater, more meaningful NGO co-operation. NGOs welcomed the advances made toward more effective collaboration during IYC but they also emphasized the need for continued improvement.

81. The greater diversity of NGOs which worked for children during the Year was seen as a positive factor by most NGOs for the reasons mentioned earlier, i.e., the sensitization of a wider public to the needs of children, the insights gained from new perspectives and children, etc. Nevertheless, some NGOs mentioned other aspects of this phenomenon which ought not to be overlooked. NGOs for whom children are not a central interest will require somewhat different treatment in the follow-up period from the NGOs more fully concentrated on children. Some NGOs also cautioned that there could be a danger of NGO efforts becoming too dispersed. They suggested that the NGO community should select a few priority objectives with regard to children and focus their efforts on those.

Difficulties at the international level

82. Three other obstacles were among those most frequently cited by NGOs. First, the geographic factor: some working groups of INGOs could not arrange meetings on their limited budgets because the specialists concerned were in different regions of the world. They did what they could by mail, but felt that their groups could have been more productive if closer personal contact had been possible. The geographic factor also came into play in individualized types of consultation and collaboration between NGOs and in the United Nations system organizations, especially when it involved working with INGO secretariats located in Europe. The second difficulty concerned the dissemination of IYC information materials. Some NGOs could not get materials they badly wanted for certain occasions, while others complained that they received piles of documents they had not asked for and could not use. They suggested that more selective dissemination of information materials could have been possible, although they know the problems inherent in that too. Finally, some NGOs were disappointed that, despite the action orientation of the Year, it still produced a proliferation of meetings. They emphasized, however, that this is something that must be judged case by case, as certain types of meetings were recognized as necessary first steps leading to more concrete action.

Strengths

Increased public awareness of children's needs

83. Practically every NGO considered that the advocacy side of IYC was successful and that the increased sensitivity to children's needs among the general public was the single most important strength on which to base further action. As noted earlier, some organizations were able to expand their programmes in response to increased community support, so that larger numbers of children were reached. NGOs also observed that in several affluent countries, drawing the public's attention to the problems of their own children had the effect of extending their concern to the children of less fortunate regions of the world as well. In their view, IYC has enhanced the sensitivity of a number of Governments to children's needs and has made them more willing to consult with NGOs on programmes serving children (e.g., teachers' organizations invited to become more involved in the design of government-funded special education programmes). The media are now also helping NGOs extend their reach: the increased coverage given to child-related initiatives is both a response to and a stimulus of the greater public commitment to children that developed during IYC.

Participation of children

84. The participation of children in IYC was considered by several NGOs to be one of the most positive developments of the Year. In their view, by enabling children to express their concerns, identify their own needs and work along with adults toward the solution of common problems, IYC helped create a future generation of adults who will be more sensitive to the needs of children. The accentuated development education programmes directed at children during IYC should also help to produce a generation more concerned and more knowledgeable about global issues.

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Spirit of co-operation shown in IYC

85. Some NGOs made special mention of "the spirit of IYC", which they usually characterized as one of unity, co-operation and absence of controversy. Many expressed appreciation for the flexible, service orientation of the NGO/IYC Committee. Proceeding pragmatically and avoiding positions on matters of substance, the Committee - which was open to all who wanted to work for children - was able to unite NGOs of diverse philosophic and political orientations in a common effort.

86. On many occasions, NGOs also explicitly thanked the IYC and UNICEF secretariats for the many services they rendered and for fostering the excellent spirit of co-operation that was developed between NGOs and the United Nations system.

III. NGO FOLLOW-UP TO IYC

Introduction

87. This section of the report is divided into two parts. The first part outlines the decisions taken at the final plenary session of the NGO/IYC Committee (15-16 May 1980) regarding the mechanisms/arrangements required for continued NGO co-operation on behalf of children. The second part reviews both NGO priorities for future programming and the support services NGOs will need at national and international levels to carry out successfully their post-IYC plans.

Mechanisms for the co-ordination of NGO child-related programmes in the post-IYC period

88. The following paragraphs summarize the decisions taken at the final plenary session of the NGO/IYC Committee (15-16 May 1980):

(a) In response to questions posed by several organizations, the plenary participants outlined a number of services they felt were necessary to the continued co-operation of NGOs on programmes for children. They included the expansion of information-sharing systems (i.e., keeping people in touch with one another), the continuation of bilateral and group relationships between NGOs and UNICEF as well as with other parts of the United Nations system, the development of issue-oriented co-operation between NGOs and UNICEF in both industrialized and non-industrialized countries; and the establishment and maintenance of NGO structures capable of assisting initiatives on international, national and community levels. The importance of improving communication between national groups and of stimulating both action and advocacy programmes at the national level was also emphasized.

(b) With these services in mind, it was decided that the NGO Committee on UNICEF be entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring adequate NGO follow-up to IYC. Many participants were anxious to designate an already existing group as the co-ordinator of NGO activity and felt that the NGO Committee on UNICEF, with its longstanding relationship to the lead agency, was the most logical choice. It was recognized that the NGO Committee on UNICEF was not at that point capable of providing all the services offered by the NGO/IYC Committee, but members of the NGO Committee on UNICEF were confident that appropriate changes could be made in its structure and functioning. In supporting the NGO Committee, a number of representatives expressed their desire that bilateral contacts between individual NGOs and UNICEF continue and their hope that the efforts of organizations which do not have formal relationships with UNICEF or other parts of the United Nations system would continue to be encouraged. In addition, concern was expressed that, in arranging NGO follow-up, adequate consideration be given to assuring the full participation of the many organizations based in Europe.

(c) The success of the NGO Committee on UNICEF in ensuring adequate follow-up was recognized as at least partially dependent on the support and assistance received from the UNICEF secretariat, as well as the Committee's ability to adapt itself to the additional responsibilities involved in this task. NGO follow-up would essentially require a "team effort" between the NGO Committee on UNICEF and UNICEF itself. Increased co-operation with UNICEF would in no way limit the independent status of the NGO Committee. The representatives of the UNICEF secretariat re-affirmed UNICEF's intention to increase contact with and strengthen the services available to NGOs through both its New York and Geneva offices. In addition, UNICEF would continue to support ad hoc groups of NGOs working on specific issues. UNICEF also must be closely involved in arranging for adequate INGO collaboration in Europe as well as in strengthening co-operation with and among NGOs at national and community levels.

89. Thus, the general conclusion of the debate was that the NGO Committee on UNICEF, in collaboration with the UNICEF secretariat, should take the responsibility for ensuring NGO follow-up to IYC, acting in accord with the ideas summarized in the preceding paragraphs. The plenary gave a mandate to the Co-ordinating Group of the NGO/IYC Committee to work out the details of NGO follow-up with the appropriate bodies, taking into account the concerns and preferences of plenary participants.

90. By December 1980 the measures referred to above were carried out. For at least a one-year transition period the Steering Committee of the NGO Committee on UNICEF was enlarged to include three vice-chairpersons instead of two (with one of the three based in Europe) and 15 (rather than 6) members at large. All organizations who served on the NGO/IYC Committee Co-ordinating Group were invited to join the Steering Committee for one year, to help ensure a smooth transition of responsibility from one committee to the other. This enlarged Steering Committee began meeting in September 1980.

91. In addition, an updated mailing list of NGO/IYC Committee members and correspondents was given to the NGO Committee on UNICEF, as were the files of the NGO/IYC Committee's New York Office. It was agreed that other materials belonging to the NGO/IYC Committee would be kept at its secretariat in Geneva for the first six months of 1981, at which time a final decision would be made on their use and availability. In light of these developments and its satisfaction with the steps that had been taken during the summer and fall of 1980, the NGO/IYC Committee Co-ordinating Group recommended that the Committee be officially dissolved by the end of that year. In his final communication with the members and correspondents of the NGO/IYC Committee (document 80/39-NGO/IYC/139), Canon Moerman stated that "the NGO Committee on UNICEF has taken the measures necessary to assure the follow-up desired by the plenary. These arrangements having been made, the Co-ordinating Group meeting in New York on 11 November and in Geneva on 4 December 1980, has agreed ... that its mission has been accomplished and that the NGO/IYC Committee will cease to exist once this letter is sent."

Priority areas for follow-up

92. In their contacts with the NGO/IYC Committee and the IYC and UNICEF secretariats, NGOs have indicated what they consider priority areas for future action. Perhaps not surprisingly, their concerns reflect the same general areas they worked in during IYC. Most NGOs, however, seem to have moved beyond the stage of general reviews of children's needs. They have selected their priorities and areas of work according to their own competencies and wish to continue working now on a more issue-oriented basis. Some have tended toward greater specialization in their follow-up programmes (e.g., an organization that selected the family as its theme for IYC may now concentrate on single-parent families or children of divorced parents).

93. The priority area mentioned most often has been the "rights of the child", but this must be broken down and interpreted. Some respondents use this term to refer to legal protection, some mean increasing respect for the child as a person, some mean working to eliminate child labour, maltreatment, malnutrition, etc. The second most frequently mentioned area for continuing action has been the family with emphasis on parenthood education or family life education, which has been widely cited in association with the other most frequently mentioned areas for follow-up such as nutrition, basic education, health, early childhood, environment, violence, play, etc. Many NGOs recognized the urgency, too, of continued assistance to refugee children, to children of migrants, and to those who suffer most from poverty and exclusion.

94. Several NGOs have also cited handicapped children as a priority for continued action and this emphasis is reflected in the activities they have planned for the International Year of Disabled Persons. During 1981 many organizations are focusing their efforts on the special needs and problems of disabled children. They are approaching IYDP with the same spirit of unity and co-operation they developed during IYC. The main focus of their activities is on the prevention of childhood disabilities, but the need for improved services and the integration of disabled children into the "mainstream" of society are also important concerns.

95. At the national level, many NGOs have identified legislation to support and protect families and children as a priority for future action. Internationally, too, INGOs have encouraged the harmonization of laws or the adoption of international instruments on specific questions (e.g., child custody, the legal rights of migrant children, international adoption). Some NGOs are centring their efforts on securing an international convention on the rights of the child.

96. Development education is another follow-up priority emphasized by several NGOs. The attention given to the situation of children all around the world during IYC dramatized for many people the concept of global interdependence. NGOs are determined to extend this awakening through continued systematic efforts.

97. NGOs have also indicated the types of programmes they will pursue in the post-IYC period. Their operational programmes will be similar to the ones undertaken during the Year, but NGOs plan to extend their scope and effectiveness in a number of ways. For one thing, their follow-up activities will be coupled with efforts to expand NGO membership and programmes in developing countries. In addition, NGOs have expressed their strong commitment to:

- continued coverage of children in their journals and newsletters, including news of United Nations programmes, case-studies, news of special projects, reminders to members and the public of the special groups of children;

- encouraging local and national affiliates to continue to work on the child-related projects begun in IYC and to develop their relationships with national and local IYC groups or their successor bodies;

- maintaining and strengthening the links established during IYC with other NGOs, with Governments, and with the United Nations system, especially to promote exchange of information on children; and

- encouraging children's participation to the fullest extent possible.

98. Some organizations that did not have a particular interest in children before IYC have taken steps now to ensure that children are an abiding concern within their organizations. This has been done by keeping children as a central theme for the next three or four years, by inserting projects for children in their long-term programming, by setting up standing committees or commissions which will keep the general membership informed on children's issues and be responsible for programmes relating to them. A few organizations have scheduled follow-up meetings on children, either within their own organization or with other NGOs collaborating on specific actions. One international service club has gone so far as to incorporate support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child into its constitution.

99. Organizations whose work is normally centred on children find that their activities, too, have been marked by IYC. In the beginning some of these organizations found it hard to get their members to be enthusiastic about the Year. "Every year is the Year of the Child for us", was always the response. But many of these NGOs report that the new perspectives of IYC caused them to re-evaluate some of their programmes and often their attitudes towards children, or opened their eyes to new possibilities which they intend to pursue.

Support needed for effective follow-up

100. NGOs have consistently identified two forms of support which they consider absolutely essential to IYC follow-up: continued liaison at all levels with others working for children, and continued efforts to inform different sectors of the population about children's needs.

Support needed at the national level

101. NGOs clearly feel that IYC follow-up must take place primarily at the national level, and it is here that they concentrate their attention. Specifically, they cite the need for:

- continuing liaison with, or participation in, the groups set up to carry on the work of National IYC Commissions;
- the formation of national coalitions of NGOs in order to eliminate duplication of effort, strengthen the programmes of individual NGOs, focus on specific concerns, and ensure that adequate attention is given to children's needs more generally;
- closer NGO-government collaboration in reviewing the situation of children and policies affecting them;
- an increase in the resources channelled to children's services, including those provided by NGOs, both to expand current programmes and to initiate activities aimed at reaching relatively neglected groups;
- improved legislative provisions for the support and protection of families and children;
- further development of media support;
- increased co-operation between UNICEF and NGOs in expanding development education programmes.

Support needed at the international level

102. Several of the suggestions in the preceding paragraph have their parallels in suggestions regardng IYC follow-up at the international level. It is hoped, for example, that the NGO community will continue to be represented in any consultative group on children which the lead agency might convoke. There is a desire among INGOs to continue collaborating with UNICEF on special development education projects. Many wish to continue the closer consultative relationships developed during the IYC with WHO, ILO, UNHCR, UNESCO and other United Nations agencies.

Conclusions

103. The wide-ranging involvement of NGOs in IYC is significant both in terms of its contribution to the Year itself, and its implications for future UNICEF-NGO co-operation. During IYC, NGOs demonstrated in a dramatic way their ability to provide an additional, innovative dimension to country-level programmes, particularly in such fields as primary health care, water supply and sanitation, women's activities and non-formal education given adequate encouragement and support by UNICEF, NGOs can continue to provide these services and can contribute to the realization of UNICEF's objectives for children in the post-IYC period.

104. Perhaps most importantly, IYC has pointed out the potential benefits of direct UNICEF-NGO collaboration at the country level. This will involve more frequent and substantive contacts between UNICEF country offices and national NGOs in the planning, design and implementation of specific programmes. In addition to the fields cited above (para. 103), these joint efforts could encompass areas such as food production, appropriate technology, emergency relief operations, services for disabled and abandoned and displaced children, and breast-feeding promotion.

105. UNICEF-NGO co-operation at all levels should be seen as a two-way process that includes calling attention to neglected problems and needs of children; advocacy for government action designed to meet these needs; the monitoring of services for children; direct provision or support of services at the country level; studies on the situation of children (especially those with special problems or living under difficult conditions); the exchange of information and operational expertise; and joint financing arrangements.

106. It is clear that the fruitful new relationships developed during IYC were to a large extent made possible by the longstanding tradition of UNICEF co-operation with NGOs. IYC has reaffirmed the value of these joint efforts as well as expanded the opportunities for future co-operation at all levels and in a variety of fields.